

SENATE State Admin

Exhibit No. 4

Date 3-25-2011

Bill No. HB 483

**Margaret Mullaly**  
**House Bill 483**  
**Senate State Administration Committee**  
**March 25, 2011**

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Margaret Mullaly and I rise in support of House Bill 483.

The First Amendment right to worship as we see fit, without the interference or penalization of the government, has been one of the most important fundamental rights of the American people since the foundation of our great country. The Founding Fathers were very careful to institute the separation of church and state- not to keep religion from politics, I might add, but to keep government from exercising control over the worship practices of its people, or showing excessive favoritism for a certain denomination.

Religious persecution was the very reason that caused the Pilgrims to colonize America, and that caused many other subsequent people to come here as well. They wanted to worship their God as their conscience saw fit, not as the state dictated. This has been part of the American dream for as long as there has been an America.

Our unique protection of religious freedoms has caused our country to become a rare safe haven where believers of all religions are free to worship as they desire, while still coexisting in peace. Unfortunately, there has been a disturbing trend lately where the government is trying to subject believers to undue scrutiny for some of their beliefs. A good example of this recent infringement into our fundamental First Amendment rights was the initial proceedings involving the Canyon Ferry Road Baptist church.

This infringement was noted and condemned by the decision of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. Judge Noonan summed the situation up quite well when he stated,

"What has happened here is that a small congregation has been put to trouble and expense in order to exercise its right to speak on an issue seen by it to be of vital religious significance. One lesson of history is that small incursions on freedom are to be resisted lest they grow greater."

This is most certainly the truth. Minor impingements upon our freedoms rarely remain so for long; they rapidly become more invasive if left unchecked.

I am only twenty years old, but I have studied history extensively. Based on my research, I feel strongly that if we do not carefully protect our freedoms, they will certainly cease to exist. I respectfully urge you to support House Bill 483, for in so doing, you support the very rights that made America the great land it is today.

Signed,

Margaret A. Mullaly

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